

AUGUST SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE

Cleaning Our Air for a Healthier Community

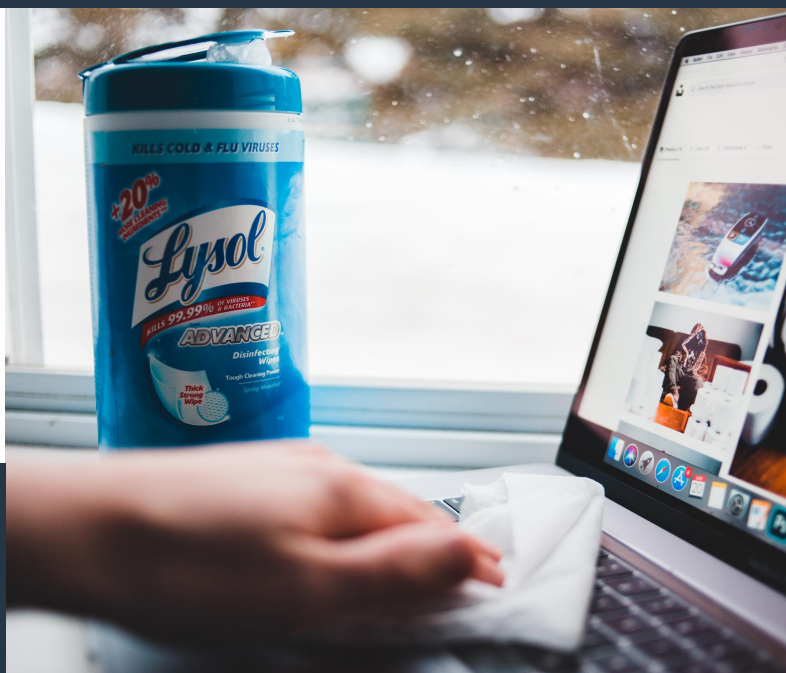
WHY INDOOR AIR MATTERS

We spend a lot of time indoors, and that air can be more polluted than the air outside. Contamination can come from many sources such as chemicals or mold, and the pollutants can cause illnesses such as respiratory problems, headaches, cancer, and even death. However there are practical steps we can take for a healthier, more sustainable home ([see this guide for more details](#)).

CLEANING SUPPLIES

Commonly used household cleaning products can have chemicals in them that can be harmful if inhaled (along with other health impacts we won't discuss here). However, you may be cleaning more now because of COVID-19. Here are some tips for safer cleaning during this pandemic.

- ☁ Look for cleaners with the [Safer Choice](#) label. Safer Choice cleaners are safer for human and environmental health.
- ☁ See these two guides on how to clean and disinfect during the pandemic.
 - [University of Washington Guide](#)
 - [Western States PEHSU Guide](#)
- ☁ If you want a list of products that are safe for human health but also guard against COVID-19, see the Environmental Working Group's list [HERE](#).
- ☁ Green Seal (a third party certification for safer cleaning products) has great resources for home cleaning including an infographic on how to protect your lungs. See all the resources [HERE](#).



MATERIALS & MORE

Be mindful of the materials in your home and how they may be sources of air pollution. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), gases emitted by some materials, can cause adverse health effects. Concentrations of VOCs are often higher indoors than outdoors (see [EPA's page on VOCs](#)). Here are some tips and resources to help you be safer.

- ☁ When purchasing furniture or paint, consider buying [GREEDGUARD](#) certified items. This certification ensures that the materials and paint have lower emission limits.
- ☁ The EPA recommends several steps to [reduce your exposure to VOCs](#) such as proper storage of materials, following the manufacturer's directions, and more.
- ☁ Other resources for cleaner indoor air:
 - [Care for Your Air: A Guide to Indoor Air](#)
 - [12 Natural Ways to Improve Indoor Air](#)